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ABSTRACT

The status of adult education in Swaziland was examined. Data were collected through a survey of 100 practitioners at 20 institutions that elicited 66 usable responses (response rate, 66%), consultative meetings with leading scholars in adult education inside and outside Swaziland, and a review of pertinent documents and literature. Key findings were as follows: (1) all 20 educational institutions except CARITAS provided adult education; (2) adult education's clientele included male and female youths and adults; (3) programs were meeting learners' needs regarding problem-solving, farming, coping, writing, resource management, and reading skills; (4) adult educators faced numerous constraints, including insufficient resources, misconceptions about adult education, a lack of competent leaders in the field, a gap between practice and research, and inadequate government support. The following were among 30 specific recommendations for improving adult education in Swaziland: (1) define adult education within the Swaziland context to give practitioners a uniform understanding of the term; (2) promote networking among practitioners and organizations providing adult education; (3) hold regular seminars and workshops for practitioners; (4) provide professional development opportunities for practitioners; (5) provide universal access to adult education; (6) increase funding for adult education; and (7) increase efforts to improve adult education's image. (Contains 23 references.) (MN)

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Determination of the Status of Adult Education in Swaziland

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The purpose of this study was to determine the status of adult education in Swaziland in terms of the providers, clientele, needs of the clientele, professional competencies needed by facilitators, constraints faced, general aspects of adult education, and suggestions to improve adult education. Information was gathered through consultative meetings and the use of a self-administered questionnaire to 20 institutions. One hundred practitioners participated in this study from which sixty-six (66%) returned usable questionnaires. The findings of the study show that: (1) all the institutions provided adult education except CARITAS; (2) the clientele include both youths and adults, men and women; (3) the learners' needs which were met to an appreciative extent were problem-solving, farming, coping, writing, resource management, and reading skills; (4) facilitators of adult education needed all the competencies rated in order to teach more effectively; (5) the constraints faced in conducting adult education included a shortage of resources, attitude of people towards adult education, shortage of trained personnel and facilitators in adult education, too broad learning needs, misconception about adult education, current status of adult education, lack of competent leaders in the field of adult education, existence of a gap between practice and research, proliferation of institutions offering adult education, international trends in adult education, and lack of government support; (6) the conception of adult education varied from institution to institution; and (7) there were many ways suggested ,which if adopted, could improve adult education in Swaziland. It is recommended that a national conference on adult education be organised in order to allow representatives from the various institutions to present their institutional position and experiences with adult education and debate whether or not an organ could be created to harmonise and co-ordinate adult education in Swaziland.

In Swaziland like in many developing countries, a large sum of money is spent on funding formal education to the neglect of adult education. In addition to a large investment in formal education, more attention is given to issues that concern formal education as it is evidenced in the recent National Policy Statement of 1998. Even in the recent shift and realization of the increased demand for adult education, emphasis has been on eradicating illiteracy. According to Dlamini (2000), Swaziland has alleviated illiteracy such that literacy has increased from 30% to over 70% through Sebenta National Institute. In recent years, Swaziland has been blessed with the proliferation of institutions or organizations whose primary goal is to be provide adult education. These institutions are government, parastatal, and non-government oriented. It is the increase of these institutions that lends itself to the need to systematically explore the current status of adult education in Swaziland. In order to systematically examine this issue, it was deemed necessary to articulate the gist of the problems of adult education in Swaziland, review pertinent literature, and elicit views of the practitioners from selected institutions and organizations that provide adult education.

The Issue/Problem

In Swaziland, many institutions and organizations are believed to be providing adult education. Some provide adult education in a formal setting while others offer it under non-formal settings. However, several issues can be raised regarding the provision of adult education in Swaziland. First, does the Government of Swaziland recognise the role of adult education in enabling the public to acquire civic, social, practical, and political skills? If so, what organs are put in place to support adult education and harmonise the activities of the many providers? The skills stated above are necessary to increase people's participation in the management of the countries' limited resources. Second, how committed is the Government to providing the overall co-ordination of adult education? Is adult education given support that has equal standing and is complementary to primary,

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secondary, and tertiary formal education as reflected in the 1985 National Policy Statement on Education? Third, at a Conference on the Future of adult education in Southern Africa in 1987, which was held in Harare Zimbabwe, it was reported that Swaziland was among those SADC countries whose adult education programme (a) lacked a co-ordinating unit, (b) was without a national policy to guide and direct adult education, and (c) had an increase in the number of institutions and agencies that provide adult education. Fourth, in its latest National Policy Statement on Education, the Government of Swaziland (1998) placed more emphasis on formal education with some areas of concern. The areas of concern included quality curriculum, well-trained teachers, quality facilities, improved teacher-to-pupil ratio, teaching and learning attitudes, and improved attitudes, morals, and values. What about adult education? Where is the emphasis? Which institutions provide adult education? Who are/or should be the clientele for adult education? Are adult education programmes meeting the needs of the learners? What should be the professional competencies of facilitators? (5) What constraints are faced in conducting adult education? What is the general conception of adult education? Finally, what is meant by professionalization of the field of adult education?

The role of adult education in national development has long been recognised. Dlamini (1977) noted that adult education should, among other purposes, (1) develop vocational, technical and professional competencies; (2) provide education for health, welfare, and family living; (3) develop civic, political, and community competence; (4) be directed toward individual self-fulfilment; and (5) provide remedial education. According to Ojok (1977), it was for this very reason that a seminar was organised. The purpose of the seminar was to allow adult educators to share views on important topics in adult education. Specifically, it was designed to (1) re-appraise the meaning and significance of rural development in Swaziland, (2) assess the role that adult education can play in rural development, and (3) assess the effectiveness of adult education methods in the rural development in Swaziland. In view of these submissions, more especially from local participants, what has been done to follow up with these innovative developments in adult education? As indicated earlier, what is the current status of adult education in Swaziland seems to be a salient question to raise again?

Available literature regarding the varied and broad definitions of adult education, as well as, the diverse and shifting meanings of adult education (Belanger & Blais, 1995; UNESCO, 1997; Duke, 1995; Nyerere, 1982; Walters, 2000) prompted this study. Furthermore, literature has reiterated the existing gaps with respect to the kind and processes of research in adult education, the need to occasionally determine the impact of research in adult education practice, and partnerships between researchers and providers of adult education, and the debate on whether or not to professionalize the field of adult education (Duke, 1995). Also there is a need to assess the emergence of new trends in adult education in various contexts and the challenge to study adult education in each society (Belanger & Blais, 1995). These assertions by the various authors present a challenge to every stakeholder in adult education. Hinzen (1995) in his editorial remarks stated that research and evaluation in adult education is among the major programmes that support adult education internationally in cooperation with partners. This observation re-affirms the need to conduct systematic inquiry into adult education.

In Swaziland, very little has been documented about adult education. Evidence on the paucity of literature on adult education is reflected by Ojok (1977), the Seventh Biennial Conference/Workshop of the African Adult Education (1980), the Task Force (nd) which compiled the National Education Review Commission Report, and the UBLS (1989) report of the National Conference Of Adult Educators. From these documents and reports, there is no evidence of concrete plans to address adult education in Swaziland. Even in the most recent documents, the National Policy Statement on Education of 1998, said very little about adult education. In fact, the National Policy noted only two aspects. First, that the Ministry of Education shall support all adult education initiatives in the country. Second, that the Ministry of Education shall continue to perform its coordinating function while the relevant ministries continue to run such programmes. Such a statement, by and large, does not reflect any serious commitment on the part of Government to adult education. The Honourable Prime Minister, Dr. S.B.S. Dlamini addressed participants during a meeting organised by the Swaziland Association of Adult Education. In his remarks, Dlamini (2000) noted that the country's improvement in adult education has been commendable in terms of eradicating illiteracy. He stated that adult education should help Swazi citizens with creative minds to eradicate poverty and find solutions to health problems. Such a notation leaves a spectrum of other issues, which should be addressed in order to enhance the impact of adult education on society. It is against this background that a study to assess the current status of adult education in terms of selected aspects became necessary.

The Swaziland Government in its Commission Report (1985) raised key questions regarding adult education. These questions were the basis for this research. The Commission Report raised the following questions: (1) What policy guideline should be established to improve non-formal education and adult education in Swaziland? (2) What administrative machinery should be established in order to improve the efficiency of correspondence education in Swaziland? (3) What kind of infrastructure should be established so that pupils who drop out at primary, secondary, and high schools could benefit from the correspondence? (4) What structural lines need to be established so that formal education and non-formal education could complement each other? Finally, (5) How can the study centres both in the urban and rural areas be developed so that the entire non-formal programmes could be run efficiently? However, there has been no organ put into place to monitor and evaluate any interventions addressing these questions. Therefore there is a need to study the current status of adult education in Swaziland.

In Botswana and South Africa, tremendous efforts have been expended, and are continuously being expended to address issues in adult education. According to Youngman (1998), a series of professional lectures in adult education have been conducted. These lectures have opened a new era and challenge (1) to further policy development in adult education; (2) for a sustained programme of capacity-building based on training, research, and evaluation in adult education; (3) for a programme of advocacy undertaken by adult educators themselves to highlight and publicise the significance of their work; and (4) the need to mobilise adult learners and facilitate grassroots initiatives for adult education. Pandy (1998) stated that South Africa has organised Adult Learner's Week. It was through the Adult Learner's Week that key goals were formulated. These goals were to (1) promote the culture of lifelong learning and its significance in the spheres of community, society, and the economy, (2) promote learners and practitioners along with the recognition of their worth and work, (3) lobby for a higher profile for adult learning in the broadest sense in terms of resource allocation, (4) highlight and orientate provision of learner's needs, (5) enhance networking amongst all those involved in adult education, and (6) promote the need for a national integrated education and training system with special emphasis on basic adult learning. In this regard, it became evident that a systematic study needed to be conducted in Swaziland to determine the current status of the field of adult education as perceived by the practitioners in adult education.

Theoretical Framework and the Purpose of the Study

The research was built on the premise that adult education is widely accepted as one of the many accelerators of national development, a means to alleviate poverty, a process which promotes skill acquisition, civic values, justice, fairness, and acceptability (Omolewa, 1995a). Omolewa further argued that there are problems in adult education. First, adult education still does not attract many researchers. Second, there is no consensus about the meaning, definition, and concepts of adult education. Third, these scenarios described above have led to indecisive policies on the structure and management of adult education. Omolewa further claimed that although considerable research has been done on adult education in Africa, it is not comparable to the research work conducted in the United States of America, Western Europe, and Latin America. These assertions present a real challenge in developing countries like Swaziland. The need to conduct a study to establish the current status of adult education in Swaziland becomes inevitable. This study was therefore conducted to establish the status of adult education in using selected aspects of adult education. Results from the study could provide baseline information which would be used to further develop a policy on adult education in Swaziland, guide both adult learners and practitioners, direct the activities of institutions which provide adult education and researchers, and assist the Swaziland Government to decide about its role in supporting adult education. Also, this study was undertaken as an initiative to cause an on-going debate on adult education, sensitize the Government of Swaziland in particular to understand the necessity to support adult education and learn from what is currently known about adult education in Swaziland instead of relying on information from outside the country.

Specific Questions the Study is Designed to Address

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What agencies provide adult education in Swaziland?
2. Who are the clientele of these programmes in Swaziland?
3. To what extent do adult education programmes target the real needs of the people in Swaziland?
4. What are the constraints faced in providing quality adult education in Swaziland?
5. What are the competencies of resource persons or facilitators in the various institutions that provide adult education in Swaziland?
6. What is the general conception of adult education?
7. What is the conception of "professionalization" of adult education?

In addition to these questions, the respondents were asked to forward their suggestions on possible ways to effect some changes in adult education in Swaziland.

Data Collection

A combination of data collection methods was used. These included consultative meetings with key individuals, desk research, and a formal survey using a self-administered instrument. The formal survey provided the information in this report, which is expressed in tabular form preceded by a narration.

Consultative Meetings

Consultative meetings with leading scholars in adult education within Swaziland and outside (Namibia, Lesotho and Botswana) were conducted. The purpose of these consultative meetings was twofold. First, to gather literature from some SADC member states in view of the fact that many scholars like Youngman (1995), Walters (1995), Omolewa (1995b), and Koroma (1998) have lamented the paucity of literature based on Africa's experience and setting. They argue that most available literature in adult education is often based on overseas experiences and written strictly in the context of those countries. Second, to solicit views of the most experienced and reputable scholars in terms of possible items to be included in the survey form that was developed to gather the data.

Desk Research

Desk research involved searching for relevant and related literature using the University Library of the Luyengo Campus, documents from Conferences, *Adult Education and Development Journal* from Germany, and the online public access catalogue [OPAC] which is provided by the library in the University of Swaziland.

Formal Survey

Following the consultative meetings and literature review, a self-administered questionnaire was designed and bound into a booklet for it to be presentable (Dillman, 1978), reviewed by a panel of experts and pilot tested to establish its validity and reliability for the appropriate domains. The final composite survey form was administered to 20 institutions where 5 practitioners were randomly selected to participate in this study. One hundred (100) respondents participated yielding 66 returned usable questionnaires.

Data Analysis

Qualitative and quantitative analysis were used to analyse the data. The qualitative method was used to analyse the data collected through interviews and consultative meetings. Also, the suggestions and comments from the respondents were edited and summarised without changing the meaning and stated in recommendation form.

The survey responses were coded, punched into the computer using the SPSS/PC+ to compute frequencies, means and standard deviations.

Findings

The findings of this study are presented in narrative and tabular form. The findings are presented according to the objectives of the study. Additional information is captured and reported since it was collected in this study. The additional information includes (1) the influence of one's organization on the adult learners, (2) general suggestions or comments on adult education, and (3) demographic characteristics of the respondents in this study. The additional information were sought to add more pertinent indicators on how organizations may have impacted the clientele either negatively or positively; to provide room for the respondents to suggest ways adult education could be improved, and to establish selected demographic characteristics of practitioners in adult education.

Institutions that Provide Adult Education in Swaziland

The respondents were asked to indicate which institutions among those believed to be providing adult education were indeed providing it. As can be seen in Table 1, all the institutions except CARITAS were viewed to be providing adult education. CARITAS claimed that its primary focus is on providing social and welfare needs of the refugees in Swaziland.

Table 1. Institutions that provide Adult Education in Swaziland

	Institution	Yes	No
1.	Lowveld Training Centre	(X)	( )
2.	Women in Development	(X)	( )
3.	Nhlangano Agricultural skills Training centre	(X)	( )
4.	School of Appropriate Farm Technology	(X)	( )
5.	Swaziland Farmer Development Foundation	(X)	( )
6.	African Cooperative Action Trust	(X)	( )
7.	Manzini Industrial Training Centre	(X)	( )
8.	Siteki Agricultural Skills Centre	(X)	( )
9.	Northern Farmer Training Centre	(X)	( )
10.	Institute of Distance Education	(X)	( )
11.	Sebenta National Institute	(X)	( )
12.	Big Bend Adult Training Centre	(X)	( )
13.	Mpisi Training Centre	(X)	( )
14.	Cooperative Development Education Centre	(X)	( )
15.	Division of Extra Mural Services	(X)	( )
16.	Emlalatini Development Centre	(X)	( )
17.	Family Life Association	(X)	( )
18.	Public Health Education Unit	(X)	( )
19.	Institute of Development Management	(X)	( )
20.	CARITAS	( )	(X)

Clientele for Adult Education

The study attempted to establish the clientele for adult education in Swaziland. The study revealed that the views of the respondents on the target group for adult education were varied. The views are presented in Table 2. As can be observed in Table 2, a great majority of the respondents believe that the clientele for

adult education should include both young and old people (85%) and include both men and women (73%). As for the remaining potential clientele group, the respondents believe that they should also be part of the target audience for adult education. The "International learners only" category was the exception.

Table 2. Clientele for Adult Education (N = 66)

Clientele	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
1. Youth only	5	8	61	92
2. Adult only	13	20	53	80
3. Both youth and adults	46	85	10	15
4. Women development	7	11	59	89
5. Men only	12	18	54	82
6. Both men and women	48	73	18	27
7. Normal learners only	23	35	43	65
8. Special learners only	8	12	58	88
9. Government officers only	3	5	63	95
10. International learners only	2	3	64	97
11. Both government and international learners	18	27	48	73

Meeting the Learners' Needs

Information on the extent to which institutions providing adult education were able to meet the learner's needs was also sought. Table 3 shows that a great majority of the respondents were in agreement that the institutions which provide adult education have to some extent met the learner's needs in terms of: (1) problem solving, (2) farming, (3) coping, (4) writing, and (5) resource management skills. The learner's skills that were least met were catering and typing skills.

Table 3. Meeting the Learners' Needs

	Skills	n	X	sd
1.	Reading	55	3.02	1.21
2.	Writing	56	3.14	1.41
3.	Coping	54	3.37	1.20
4.	Problem-solving	61	3.95	1.01
5.	Sewing	45	2.40	1.57
6.	Office management	50	2.60	1.29
7.	Farming	51	3.39	1.54
8.	Handicraft	47	2.49	1.54
9.	Catering	48	1.94	1.19
10.	Resource management	53	3.06	1.36
11.	Computer use	49	2.10	1.42
12.	Typing	45	1.51	1.10

Rating Scale: 1=Not met; 2= Met to a least extent; 3=Met to some extent; 4=Met to a greater extent; 5=Met to greatest extent.

Institutions' or Organizations' Influence on the Adult Learners' Attitude towards Adult Education

In attempting to establish how each organization or institution has influenced the adult learners' attitude toward adult education, respondents were asked to share their views on this issue. Overall, the influence was institutional - based and oriented. Most of the institutions have greatly influenced adult learners'

attitude towards adult education in terms of developing a liking of adult education and attaching more value to it. The views of the respondents were edited and are summarized below:

1. Adult learners seem to appreciate the value of adult education and participate more actively in the lessons.
2. Adult learners have developed a sense of self-directed learning.
3. One needs data that are more objective in order to establish precisely how one's institution has influenced adult learners.
4. Some institutions cannot accurately claim to have influenced adult learners in the absence of follow-up strategies or tracer studies of graduates.
5. Some graduates are now teaching others basic literacy skills; namely reading, writing, and numeracy skills.
6. Adult learners have acquired skills to engage in fund raising in order to support adult education.
7. Adult learners perceive adult education as a personal, professional, and a national development strategy.
8. Adult learners perceive adult education as a means to improve one's way of life.
9. Adult learners consider adult education as something that one has to acquire regardless of age.
10. Adult learners consider adult education to be an interactive process.
11. Adult learners have been prompted to further their education.
12. Adult learners have learnt to spend their time doing businesses.
13. Adult learners now use participatory learning in adult education classes.
14. Adult learners now keep records of all activities they are engaged in.

Professional Competencies of Facilitators of Adult Education

The respondents were asked to rate facilitators of adult education in terms of selected aspects of professional competencies. As can be observed from Table 4, the ratings of the professional competencies of facilitators of adult education were very high. The lowest mean score was on supervision of research projects (x=4.04).

Table 4. Professional Competencies of Facilitators of Adult Education

Competencies	n	x	sd
1. Developing the curriculum for adult education	62	4.35	1.49
2. Developing modules	59	4.25	1.54
3. Using selected teaching aids	60	4.62	1.28
4. Guiding learners	57	4.86	1.19
5. Providing tutorials	55	4.44	1.52
6. Supervising research projects	57	4.04	1.91
7. Teaching effectively	57	4.70	1.32
8. Taking learners contributions	60	4.68	1.50
9. Conducting research on needs	56	4.59	1.41
10. Counseling learners	54	4.59	1.38

Rating Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Slightly disagree; 4 = Slightly agree; 5 =Agree; 6 = Strongly agree

Constraints Faced in Conducting Adult Education

Institutions that provide adult education are perceived as facing many constraints. In order to establish these constraints, the respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the identified constraints faced in providing adult education.

Information contained in Table 5 presents the respondents' opinions regarding the extent of agreement with the constraints faced in conducting adult education. The twelve constraints that had the highest mean

rating scores included shortage of resources, attitude of people towards adult education, shortage of trained personnel in adult education, too broad learning needs, misconceptions about adult education, current status of adult education, lack of competent leaders in adult education, shortage of facilitators, existence of a gap, proliferation of institutions offering adult education, international trends in adult education, and lack of government support for adult education. The respondents however, did not agree with the constraint that there were few learners keen to enroll in adult education.

Table 5. Constraints faced in conducting adult education

	Constraint	n	x	sd
1.	Too many learners	63	3.49	1.72
2.	Few learners	60	2.90	1.75
3.	Shortage of resources	64	4.77	1.22
4.	Too broad learning needs	64	4.48	1.18
5.	Shortage of facilitators	65	4.35	1.56
6.	Lack of Government support	63	4.16	1.59
7.	Donor driven syndrome	64	3.98	1.47
8.	Existence of a gap	59	4.34	1.48
9.	Current status of adult education	58	4.40	1.32
10.	International trend in adult education	58	4.24	1.38
11.	Attitude of people towards adult education	62	4.55	1.40
12.	Lack of competent leaders in adult education	61	4.39	1.42
13.	Misconception about adult education	58	4.43	1.44
14.	Prolification of institutions offering adult education	56	4.29	1.19
15.	Shortage of trained personnel in adult education	62	4.50	1.51
16.	Reluctance to share resources by the institutions	63	2.29	1.38
17.	Abundance of resources	56	3.41	1.49
18.	Increasing institutions that offer adult education	52	3.77	1.52
19.	Lack of contextual consensus	57	3.93	1.47
20.	Lack of support structures	62	4.31	1.46

Rating Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Slightly disagree; 4 = Slightly agree; 5=Agree; 6 = Strongly agree

Conception of Adult Education

Due to the wide conception of adult education, effort was made to establish how adult education is defined by the various institutions that provide adult education. The respondents indicated that adult education is defined as shown in Table 6. The respondents indicated that adult education was conceived as (1) a learning process that pertains to knowledge, attitude and manipulative skills; (2) a process involving adult learning; (3) a discipline which focuses on developing adult members of society. Adult education was less strongly conceived as (1) a profession; (2) a field of study, and (3) a recognized professional body.

Conception of professionalization of Adult Education

Due to the wide spread belief that adult education is not professionalized, an effort was made to establish the views of the respondents regarding developing a conceptual frame work of "professionalization" of adult education.

The respondents were asked to indicate their understanding of the professionalization of adult education. Nine concepts were listed with a yes and no option to be checked by the respondents. As can be seen in Table 7, the respondents indicated their conception of professionalization of adult education. Adult education was perceived as (1) making adult education more systematic, (2) developing modes of adult

Table 6. Conception of Adult Education (N = 64)

Conception	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
1. A field of study	25	39	39	61
2. A process involving adult learning	38	59	26	41
3. A learning process that pertains to knowledge, attitude, and skills	47	73	17	27
4. A discipline which focuses on developing adult members of society	41	64	23	36
5. A profession	17	26	47	74
6. A recognized professional body	9	14	55	86

education, (3) training personnel in the technology of adult education, (4) developing a code of ethics/behaviour in adult education, (5) developing associations, (6) having a distinct criteria for the adult education profession, (7) developing formal leadership in adult education, and (8) setting up parameters for adult education. Disciplinary development of adult education was less conceived as a form of professionalization.

Table 7. Conception of professionalization of Adult Education

Conception	Yes		No		N
	n	%	n	%	
1. Making adult education more systematic	54	95	3	5	57
2. Developing formal leadership in adult education	43	78	12	22	55
3. Developing a code of ethics/behaviour	44	83	9	17	53
4. Developing modes of adult education	47	87	7	13	54
5. Training personnel in the technology of adult education	47	82	10	18	57
6. Having a distinct criteria of adult education profession	43	81	10	19	53
7. Setting up parameters for adult education	41	80	10	20	51
8. Disciplinary development of adult education	31	66	16	34	47
9. Developing of associations	44	80	11	20	55

Demographic Characteristics Of Respondents

The respondents were asked to provide their selected demographic characteristics. Table 8 presents the demographic characteristics in terms of age, working experience, marital status, sex, and qualifications.

Fifty percent of the respondents were between 31 and 40 years old. The remaining individuals were between 25-30 (18%); 41-50 (20%), and over 50 years (12%). A majority (21) of the respondents had 6-10 years while 16 had 1-5 years and 16 had over 10 years of working experience.

Information regarding the marital status of the respondents shows that a great majority was married (71%) while about 29% (n = 16) were single. As can be observed from the Table, 38 (68 %) respondents were male and females constituted about 32% (18).

Information on the qualifications of the respondents was also sought. Most respondents had a certificate (26%), a diploma, (24%) and a bachelor's degree (26%). The least qualifications were: (1) O'level certificate holders (4%). Respondents with a master's qualification were eight (15%). The remaining respondents had a doctorate (2), and post diploma in prevocational agriculture (1).

Table 8. Demographic characteristics of respondents.

Characteristic		Frequency	Percentage
Age: (N = 56)	25 – 30 years	10	18
	31 – 40 years	28	50
	41 – 50 years	11	20
	Over 50 years	7	12
Working Experience:	1 – 5 years	16	30
(N = 53)	6 – 10 years	21	40
	Over 10 years	16	30
Marital Status:	Married	40	71
(N = 56)	Single	16	29
Sex: (N = 56)	Female	18	32
	Male	38	68
Qualifications:	O' level	2	4
(N = 54)	Certificate	14	26
	Diploma	13	24
	Bachelor's degree	14	26
	Master's degree	8	15
	Other (specify)	3	5

General Suggestions/Comments On Adult Education

In the attempt to determine the current status of adult education in Swaziland, a provision was made in the research design to elicit general suggestions and comments on the field of adult education. The suggestions were summarised and are presented below in recommendation form:

1. There is a need to develop a definition of adult education within the Swaziland context so that practitioners have the same understanding of it.
2. Networking among practitioners and organizations that provide adult education needs to be promoted.
3. There is a need to mount regular seminars and workshops to allow practitioners to share their experiences. Proceedings of such seminars and workshops will document and build on what is known about adult education in Swaziland.
4. There is a need to develop strategies to improve adult education.
5. There is a need to embark on a recruitment campaign of adult learners.
6. The Rural Education Centres [REC's] should be strengthened to provide leadership in adult education in the rural areas.
7. Practitioners should be upgraded professionally in order to ensure that adult education has a cadre of competent and highly qualified practitioners.
8. There is a need to further develop the goals of adult education such that learners are provided with more than basic literacy skills, thereby enabling people to be more productive.
9. There is a need to offer adult education to all those who work with people in order to improve their effectiveness.
10. There is a need to develop a national policy on adult education.
11. adult education like other disciplines requires research in order for it to keep pace with new developments and demands.
12. There is a need to provide adequate funding support for adult education since it is not currently well funded.
13. Efforts should be expended to improve the image of adult education since its present status is low.

14. Government and non-government officers should be remunerated accordingly by their work places after taking an adult education course so that they (officers) could be motivated to improve the discipline.
15. Government should set up structures in the rural areas to support adult education activities and should include skill development of the practitioners.
16. There is a need to train facilitators who can cope with teaching at low literacy levels.
17. There is a need for selected institutions like the University of Swaziland through its Institute of Distance Learning (IDE) and Department of Adult Education to formulate strategies to provide leadership in reaching out to other institutions and practitioners in adult education.
18. There is a need for NGO's that provide adult education to realise that it important to employ qualified facilitators in adult education programmes.
19. It is important to make facilitators in adult education under NGO's understand the keys in the adult education learning process.
20. There is need to increase qualified personnel (facilitators) in adult education.
21. It is important to consider adult education as a tool to enable people in rural settings to improve themselves.
22. There is a need to ensure that adult education provided at a more formal level impacts people in the rural areas.
23. There is a need for adult education to continue improving literacy skills for the rural folks in order to enable them to read and understand development related projects.
24. Government needs to increase its financial support to institutions which provide adult education programs.
25. Graduates who have undergone training in adult education should be remunerated accordingly in order for adult education to be highly recognized.
26. There is a need to set up structures in rural areas which can support adult education programs.
27. There is a need to build up the physical structures necessary to provide adult education in rural areas.
28. Government should fund community based projects which are aimed at projecting the image of adult education.
29. Government should elicit participation of industries or companies to contribute towards the developing adult education centres and come up with a clear cut policy concerning certification or accreditation.
30. There is a need for Government to provide leadership in adult education by formulating a clear policy to guide and direct institutions which provide adult education.

Implications

Overall, there are many institutions that provide adult education in Swaziland. These many institutions should have an organ put in place to coordinate and harmonize the adult education programs they provide. The Ministry of Education needs to create a unit that could work very closely with the institutions. The clientele for adult education programs should include both youths and adults, and men and women. Institutions, which provide adult education, are not meeting all the needs of learners but selected needs such as, problem solving, writing, coping, farming, and resource management. There are many constraints, which are faced in conducting adult education. These constraints should be addressed with urgency in order to ensure that adult education programs make the anticipated impact on the learners. Practitioners as facilitators of adult education programs need to possess those critical skills in order to teach more effectively. The conception of adult education should be resolved through national debates because different practitioners seem to have their individual definitions. In addition, through the national debates, practitioners could share their views on how adult education could be improved. The issue of whether or not adult education should be professionalized should be treated with care least some deserving learners are denied the opportunity of enrolling with adult education programs in the name of professionalization as reflected in the findings of this study.

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